REMARKS

The Applicant appreciates the time taken by the Examiner to review The Applicant's present application. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in the Office Action mailed September 28, 2007.

Summary of rejections and amendments

In the Office Action mailed September 28, 2007, the previous Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102, and claims 2, 5 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. 103. The Examiner objected to claim 11, but stated that the subject matter of the claim is allowable. The rejections set forth in the September 28 Office Action are identical to those set forth in the Office Action mailed on May 18, 2007. Claim 13 was amended in the Applicant's June 29, 2007 response to the May 18 Office Action, but none of the claims are currently amended.

Basis of request for reconsideration

In the Applicant's June 29 response, the Applicant pointed out that the Moon reference cited by Examiner Hung rejecting claims under 35 U.S.C. §102 fails to disclose all of the elements of the claims. Specifically, Moon fails to disclose:

- digital audio controller chips – there is no mention in Moon that the PC104+ cards cited by Examiner Hung are used as audio controllers and the possibility that they could be used in this manner is insufficient to support an anticipation rejection without a showing by the Examiner that this use necessarily flows from the teachings of Moon (M.P.E.P. 2112); and

- the slaves detect a synchronization signal on the synchronization line and begin synchronized operation in response to detecting the synchronization signal – the slaves of Moon do not begin synchronized operation in response to detecting the synchronization signal, but instead simply determine the number of fixed-duration time slots in a frame based on the signal (col. 2, lines 48-49; col. 3, lines 1-3 and 30-31).

Because these limitations are present in all of the claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102, all of these claims are patentably distinguished from Moon.

In addition to the failure of the references to teach all of the limitations of the independent claims, the Moon reference fails to teach the limitations of the dependent claims. For instance, Moon fails to teach:

- the master beginning synchronized operation in response to detecting the synchronization signal on the synchronization line;

- the master being designated during an initialization process;

- the master repeating the synchronization signal transition at a fixed intervals;

- the master maintaining the active state of the synchronization signal for a fixed period after each transition;

- each slave sampling the synchronization line during the fixed period after each transition;

- each slave taking multiple samples of the synchronization line during the fixed period after each transition;

- each slave filtering samples of the synchronization line;

- the master transmitting non-synchronization data to the slaves via the synchronization line;

- the master maintaining the active state of the synchronization signal for a fixed period, then transitioning from the active state to the passive state, then maintaining the passive state for a fixed period, then transmitting data;

- each of the slaves determining whether an error has occurred and, in response to detecting an error, causing the master to re-synchronize the slaves;

- the master re-synchronizing by driving the synchronization line to the active state;

- the master determining whether all of the slaves are ready to begin synchronized operation before generating the synchronization signal; and

- each of the slaves driving the synchronization line to an active state until the slave is ready to begin synchronized operation, and the master determining that all of the slaves are ready to begin synchronized operation when the synchronization line is in a passive state.

In addition to Moon's failure to teach the limitations of the claims as required for a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102, Examiner Hung's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 do not meet the criteria for a prima facie case of obviousness as required by M.P.E.P. 2143. The basis for this argument is set forth in detail in the Applicant's June 29 response, and includes the failure of the cited references to teach the recited limitations which are absent from Moon as described above in connection with 35 U.S.C. §102. Further, as explained in the Applicant's June 29 response, the motivations asserted by Examiner Hung for combining Moon with other references (i.e., Intrater, Burkhardt, Song) do not make sense, and even teach away from the suggested combinations.

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Allowable subject matter

Examiner Hung stated that claim 11 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but that this claim would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including the limitations of the base and intervening claims. Because the Applicant believes Examiner Hung has failed to make prima facie cases of anticipation and/or obviousness as to the claims from which claim 11 depend, the Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to this claim be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance and, for at least the foregoing reasons, respectfully requests allowance of all claims pending in the application.

If any extensions of time are necessary to prevent the above referenced application from becoming abandoned, the Applicant hereby petitions for such extensions. If any fees are inadvertently omitted, or if any additional fees are required, or if any amounts have been overpaid, please appropriately charge or credit those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-3085 of the Law Offices of Mark L. Berrier.

Respectfully submitted,

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